



WISCONSIN

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Division of Economic Support
Bureau of Work Support Programs

**TO: Economic Support Supervisors
Economic Support Lead Workers
Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators
W-2 Agencies**

FROM: Stephen M. Dow
Policy Analysis & Program Implementation Unit
Work Programs Section

BWSP OPERATIONS MEMO

No.: 01-20

**File: 1120
2899**

Date: 04/04/2001

Non W-2 ☒ W-2 ☐ CC ☐

PRIORITY: High

SUBJECT: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM - 6-MONTH REVIEWS

CROSS REFERENCE: Income Maintenance Manual, I-A, 20.1.1
Food Stamp Handbook
BWSP Operations Memo 98-04, 99-09, 01-01, & 01-18.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 23, 2001

PURPOSE

This memo describes changes to the way Food Stamp (FS) eligibility review interviews may be conducted.

BACKGROUND

In October, 1997, at the urging of Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the Office of Food Stamps and Medical Assistance (OFSMA) implemented prospective budgeting for the Food Stamp Program (FSP). FNS advocated for this change as a way to improve our FSP payment accuracy rate. One of the conditions of opting for prospective budgeting was that program participants were required to be certified every 3 months in a face-to-face (FTF) interview. In an effort to address workload issues for caseworkers and access issues for program participants, a waiver was obtained to allow alternating FTF reviews with non face-to-face (NFTF) reviews. The intent was to reduce errors. However, the error rate has not decreased significantly.

Feedback from local agencies over the past few years indicated increased frustration on the part of FSP participants and caseworkers regarding 3-month reviews. The NFTF reviews were

actually creating more work rather than less for participants and local staff. Many times cases participating in a NTF review did not send in all the necessary information which either delayed processing the review or closed their case. If a case closed, a new FTF application would be required and child care, work, and transportation arrangements would be needed. These issues convinced OFSMA to change the FS review requirements.

NEW POLICY

As of April 23, 2001 reviews will be required every 6 months for most cases and only FTF reviews will be allowed in most circumstances.

1. Cases containing **only** elderly or disabled individuals will continue to have 12-month reviews set.
2. Reviews completed (confirmed in CARES) on or after April 23, 2001 will have their next FS review date set for 6 months, or 12 months depending on the type of case.
3. Reviews scheduled on or after April 23, 2001 will need to be done as a FTF review. The review "switch" on screen ANRQ will be "turned off." If the FTF review is waived, this must be documented on case comments.
4. Reviews confirmed before April 23, 2001 will have 3-month reviews set. These last 3-month reviews can be conducted as FTF reviews or NTF.
5. The prospective budgeting procedures outlined in Operations Memo 01-01 and the follow up Question & Answer Operations Memo 01-18 continue to apply.

With the 6-month review, there is a greater emphasis on the estimation of a customers prospective income and emphasizing required change reporting. It is essential to stress to the customer the changes that are required to be reported (see Operations Memos 99-09 and 00-43).

6. FTF reviews may be waived when an authorized representative cannot be appointed **and** 1 of these circumstances is true:
 - a. Recipients can't come to the office because they are elderly or disabled and no other household members are able to come to the office **or**
 - b. No household member is available to come to the office due to hardships such as illness, severe weather, lack of transportation, hours of work, etc.

REPORTED CHANGES

Remember that these changes continue as required to be reported:

1. Household Composition
2. Unearned income of \$25 or more
3. Earned income change in rate of pay
4. Full or part-time employment status (as defined by the employer)
5. Source of earned income
6. Address, rent/mortgage, or utility expense if HH moves

7. Vehicles (buying or selling)
8. Assets if the total exceeds \$2000 (\$3000 if FSG includes a member age 60 or over)
9. Changes in the legal obligation to pay support.

EXAMPLES

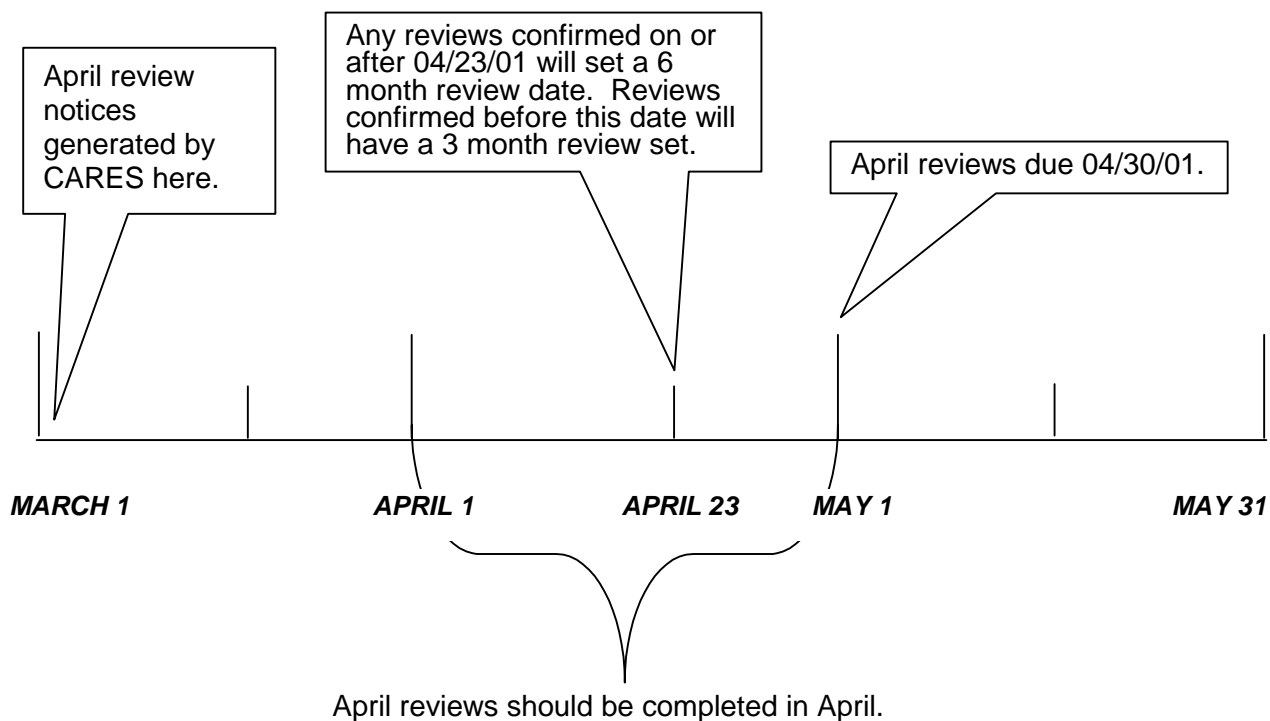
EXAMPLE #1

Jerry's April NFTF review is completed and confirmed on April 12, 2001. A FTF review will be due by July 31, 2001 (3 months).

EXAMPLE #2

Taylor is due for an April FS review. She comes in for a FTF review on April 18 2001, but is missing her check stubs. She completes the review but is given a request for verification form and told to provide verification by April 30. She provides it on April 27 and the worker confirms the review on April 30. A FTF review will be due by October 31, 2001 (6 months).

The timeline below indicates the effect on the next review.



CONTACT

DES CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center

Email: carpolcc@dwd.state.wi.us
Telephone: (608) 261-6317 (Option #1)
Fax: (608) 266-8358

Note: Email contacts are preferred. Thank you.